



Timely Topics

Library of Michigan Services to State Government

Visit michigan.gov/timelytopics for this and previous issues!



Special points of interest:

- Michigan Rails Conference

Summer/Fall 2013

Getting There

The history of Michigan, nay of the United States, is intimately connected to modes of transportation. The voyageurs opened the interior with their canoes and were followed by larger modes of water transport. Barges and boats plied canals, rivers and lakes to make commerce and people move. As lumber fell, roads opened more avenues to the interior.

The next great leap was the introduction of rail. It made travel faster and the viability of agricultural endeavors profitable even though the farms were hundreds of miles from urban centers.

The era of rail dominance includ-

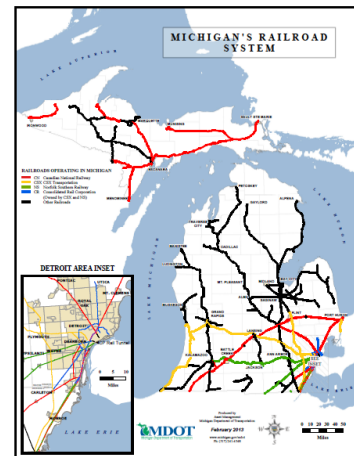
ed the beloved interurbans, largely passenger service between communities. At one time Michigan had 981 miles (1,579 km) of interurban lines. They linked Ann Arbor to Ypsilanti; Detroit, Jackson and Chicago; or Detroit, Monroe and Toledo, to name a few.

The development of the highway system contributed to the decline and dismantling of the interurban system. However, the circle of life has brought the concept back as highways become clogged and fuel costs rise. This issue of *Timely Topics* takes a snapshot of the status of rail transport today.

Numerically speaking:

The Michigan Dept. of Transportation offers rail statistics on their

web pages at <http://mdotcf.state.mi.us/public/railstats> with links to other material at: <http://www.michigan.gov/mdot/0,4616,7-151-11056--,00.html>



Michigan's Railroad System Map http://www.michigan.gov/mdot/0,4616,7-151-11056_22444--,00.html



Michigan Rails Conference September 21, 2013

The Library of Michigan is happy to host the 2013 Michigan Rails Conference on Saturday, September 21, 2013. Keynote speakers include Michael H. Hodges, author of the award winning [Michigan's Historic Railroad Stations](#), and railroad scholar Graydon M. Meints, author of [Railroads for Michigan](#). Participants may choose from a range of historical sessions or can attend presentations devoted to rail transportation in Michigan today. The Michigan Department of

Transportation will highlight their ongoing work throughout the state and the Michigan Association of Railroad Passengers will be on hand to discuss



current day passenger travel. Other highlights include an opportunity to hear staff of the Michigan Railroad History

Museum discuss their programs, or to visit the Library of Michigan's Martha W. Griffiths Michigan Rare Book Room and view antiquarian railroad materials on display.

Go to <http://www.mi.gov/libraryofmichigan/0,2351,7-160--309555--,00.html> for additional material, or to register for the conference.



Call us for all your information needs!

373-1300: Still answered by a real person!

Phone: 3-1300 Fax: 3-3381 Law: 3-0630 Email: librarian@michigan.gov

Phone Hours: Mon - Fri 8 - 5; Building Hours: Mon - Fri 10 - 5

Library of Michigan

P.O. Box 30007
702 W. Kalamazoo St
Lansing, MI 48909

Phone: 517-373-1300
Fax: 517-373-3381
E-mail: librarian@michigan.gov
<http://michigan.gov/libraryofmichigan>

Library of Michigan staff members are available for orientation and training presentations on our services and the use of the Michigan eLibrary, MeL.org. Just Ask!

We are on the Web!!

<http://michigan.gov/libraryofmichigan>



Check out previous issues on:

Supporting Returning Servicemen — Winter/Spring 2013

Food Safety — Fall 2011

Ask Us Anything — June 2011

Voting — Fall 2008

H2Uh-Oh? — Summer 2008

Superbugs--Super Scary?? — Fall 2007

We've Got Answers!—Winter 2007

Michigan Backgrounder for Kids+ — Spring 2006

Power for the People — Fall 2005

And More at:

michigan.gov/lmtimelytopics

Legislative Trends



Across the country, use of public transit has been soaring at rates not seen since the late 1950's and the onset of the interstate freeway system. According to an NCSL report, in 2012 people took 10.5 billion trips on transit systems. Fueled by this increased demand, state legislatures have recognized the social and economic value of public transit as evidenced by their support of transit-oriented legislation, to wit:

In Utah, the expansion of rail lines is rampant: from zero miles in 1998 to 80 miles in 2013 to a projected 150 miles of light and commuter rail by 2015. To encourage economic investments and increase tax revenues for communities, lawmakers passed legislation to improve access to and increase population density along these new routes.

In Minnesota, the Metropolitan Council, a legislative agency, dedicated \$32 million to fund grants for communities to develop the areas around transit corridors. The money comes from the Livable Communities Fund, created by legislators in the 1990s and funded primarily through property taxes.

In Massachusetts, legislators made transit-oriented development the focus of MassWorks, a comprehensive infrastructure grant program geared towards municipalities and other public entities. Lawmakers allocated almost \$96 million to it in FY 2012 and FY2013. At least 67% of the funds must support infrastructure developments within a half-mile of a transit stop where two or more routes merge.

Transit Talk

Like most specializations, the world of rapid transportation has its share of acronyms. Here are a couple of the latest buzz words:

TOD: Transit-oriented developments. Mixed-use areas combining housing, shopping, services and businesses located within easily walking or biking distance of public transportation. The philosophy is that such communities generate revenue for the public and private sectors, offer more transportation choices and boost transit ridership.

BRT: Bus rapid transit. A bus system with limited stops that uses dedicated lanes and has a quick, easy way to collect fares. Because they can usually use existing roads and stations, they are a cheaper option than rail systems that require new construction.



Transit Tidbits

Boston considers itself the "Birthplace of America's Mass Transportation", beginning with a ferry service between Boston and Charlestown in 1631.

2012 was a very good year for public transit:

⇒ 79% of local ballot measures pertaining to transit funding were passed.

⇒ 3.4 million Americans met their daily recommended 30 minutes of physical activity by walking to and from transit stops.

2013 looks promising, too: \$10.578 billion of federal money is dedicated for public transit, with 1.9 billion slated for New Starts program for new and expanded rail, bus rapid transit and ferry systems.

Source: Shinkle, Douglas, "Life on the Fast Track", *State Legislatures Magazine*, May 2013.

From Our Readers

Re Veterans Services: Troops to Teachers

Troops to Teachers [TtT], a U.S. Dept. of Education and Dept. of Defense program established in 1994, helps eligible military personnel begin new careers as teachers in public and charter schools where their skills and experience are most needed.

Goals and Objectives

The goal is to improve American education, providing motivated, experienced, and dedicated personnel in classrooms by recruiting quality teachers for high-needs schools.



The three main objectives of the program are to:

1. Help relieve teacher short-ages, especially in math, science, special education and other critical subject areas.
2. Provide positive role models for the nation's public school students.
3. Assist military personnel in the successful transition to teaching as a second career. Federal funding may be provided to eligible individuals through stipends up to \$5,000 to help pay for teacher certification costs, or as bonuses up to \$10,000 to teach in a high-needs school.

Contact Information:

DANTES, Troops to Teachers
6490 Saufley Field Road,
Pensacola, FL 32509-5243
or

Michigan Department of Education,, Troops to Teachers
John A. Hannah Building,
608 W. Allegan St.,
Lansing, MI 48909
Phone: 850-452-1242
Phone: 517-373-9732
Toll Free: 800-231-6242
Toll Free: 800-801-0007
E-mail: tnt@navy.mil
E-mail: www.michigan.gov/troopstoteachers
www.ProudToServeAgain.com